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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to test several hypotheses concerning the relationship of principal-teacher value congruence to group satisfaction in elementary schools. Teachers and principals from rural and small-town public elementary schools in Illinois and Indiana were asked to respond to the VAL-ED instrument and one Heslin Group Satisfaction Inventory. Analysis of the data revealed that in high group satisfaction schools principal-teacher value divergence, rather than congruence, was prevalent. Also, teachers in high group satisfaction schools perceived their principals to be more democratic than did teachers in low group satisfaction schools. (Author)

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RELATIONSHIP OF VALUES TO GROUP SATISFACTION

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INTRODUCTION

One of the numerous duties of the school principal has always been to maintain a high degree of member satisfaction amongst his staff. To do so, apparently, requires that the principal provide teachers with both a quality administrative relationship and quality leadership within such a structure (Grassie and Caress, 1973, p. 15). One could speculate that an important integral part of such a "quality administrative relationship" might be the congruence of values between the administrator and his staff. Such an assumption is based on Homans' (1961) "Social Exchange Theory" which in its simplest form suggests that likes tend to be compatible and compatibility tends to produce satisfaction.

Ables and Conway (1973) in their investigation of belief systems among teaching teams found that a matching of belief system structures in groups was a significant factor for the level of morale within the team (p. 33). In teams where the leader and group held the same value orientations, there was a higher degree of group satisfaction.

Lupini (1965) found value congruence between teachers and administrators to be significantly related to overall school climate. However, his findings were not confirmed in a later study by Hodgkinson (1969). Hodgkinson found a relationship between staff values and some dimensions of school climate, but did not find any evidence of value congruence between administrator and teacher in relation to the organizational climate of the school. From these studies it continues to remain unclear as to what relationship, if any, exists between teacher-administrator values and the overall group satisfaction of a teaching staff.

The purpose of the present investigation was to help clarify the possible relationship of administrator-teacher value congruence to overall staff group satisfaction. The following major hypotheses were derived from an analysis of existing literature for examination:

Hypothesis 1: Those elementary teaching staffs with a high degree of group satisfaction will have a greater degree of value congruence with their school principals than those teaching staffs displaying a low degree of group satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2: Those elementary teaching staffs with a high degree of group satisfaction will have no greater degree of staff value congruence than those low group satisfaction teaching staffs.

Hypothesis 3: Those teachers of elementary teaching staffs showing a high degree of group satisfaction will have a closer value congruence with their school principals than those members of the teaching staff displaying a low degree of group satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4: Those members of elementary teaching staffs showing a high degree of group satisfaction will be no closer in value congruence with their teaching staffs than those members of elementary teaching staffs displaying a low degree of group satisfaction.

Hypothesis 5: Those elementary teaching staffs having a high degree of staff value congruence will display the same degree of group satisfaction as those staffs having a low degree of staff value congruence.

The terms value, group satisfaction, and value congruence mentioned in the above hypotheses are defined as follows:

Value: a conception of the desirable - what ought to be.

Group Satisfaction or Morale: a member's general positive evaluation of a group situation.

Value Congruence: the similarity between the value of two or more parties.

It is assumed that teacher and principal educational values may be determined objectively and accurately by the VAL-ED instrument and that the Heslin Group Satisfaction Instrument is an objective and accurate measure of group satisfaction. Both instruments have acceptable validity and reliability data available which will be reported in the Instrument section of this paper.

METHODOLOGY

Population

The population for this study was comprised of rural and small town public elementary school principals and teachers from two Illinois school districts and one Indiana school corporation whose superintendents had indicated a willingness for their subordinates to participate. The final sample included a total of 12 different elementary schools with 79 percent of the teachers from these 12 schools returning usable materials. This resulted in a sample of 192 elementary teachers.

Instrumentation

Each teacher was asked to complete one VAL-ED and one Heslin Group Satisfaction Inventory, and return both along with other information to the investigator. The VAL-ED is a 126 item Likert scale type instrument with 18 sub-scales. The names of the VAL-ED sub-scales are as follows: (1) Importance; (2) Mind; (3) School-Child, Control; (4) Teacher-Child, Control; (5) Teacher-Child, Affection; (6) Teacher-Community, Inclusion;

(7) Teacher-Community, Control; (8) Teacher-Community, Affection; (9) Administrator-Teacher, Inclusion; (10) Administrator-Teacher, Control; (11) Administrator-Teacher, Affection; (12) Administrator-Community, Inclusion; (13) Administrator-Community, Control; and (14) Administrator-Community, Affection (Schults, p. 13). The four derived scales are named and briefly explained below:

1. Likes high participation: Derived by summing all of the individual inclusion scores. A high score (17) suggests a great liking for participation while a low score (8) suggests a general dislike for participation.

2. Authority should be exercised: Derived by summing all of the individual control scores. A high and low score are self explanatory.

3. People should be friendly: Derived by summing all of the individual's affection scores. A high and low score are self explanatory.

4. Teacher should be controlled: Derived by summing the Teacher-Community Control Scale and the Administrator-Teacher Control Scale. Once again, high and low scores are self explanatory (Pfeiffer and Heslin, p. 247).

Validity and reliability for the VAL-ED instrument as reported by Schultz (1976) were derived from a school setting. Validity was determined by the face validity method. Reliability was reported to be .86 or higher for all scales using the Split-Half Reliability method.

The Heslin Group Satisfaction Instrument, a Likert-type questionnaire containing 12 items, was used to measure both faculty and Principal group satisfaction. Six other scales which measure areas related to group satisfaction were also included in the makeup of the group

satisfaction instrument. Such additional data collection should aid in determining if the participants were taking the instrument seriously and contribute information for answering additional questions. The four scale names and a brief description of each are as follows:

Member Satisfaction: Made up of items which describe a member's general evaluation of a group situation.

Task Consensus and Cooperation: "Task consensus and cooperation encompasses (1) agreement among the members over goals, means, and distribution of work; and (2) upon which the members have agreed" (Heslin, p. 12).

Democracy: Determines whether the person sees the group as having a democratic leader as opposed to a strong authoritarian leader.

Desire for Task Consensus and Cooperation: Includes statements regarding the individual's desire for group cooperation and consensus on determining class action (Heslin, P. 12).

Validity for the Heslin Group Satisfaction instrument was determined by the Convergent Validity method which scale scores of .48 for Member Satisfaction scale, .46 on Member Freedom, and .42 on Task Consensus and Cooperation. A Convergent Validity score was not determined for the Democracy scale. Reliability was determined by the test-retest method with scores for each scale .86 or higher.

Procedure

Once collection of data was completed, responses for items from the Personal Data Sheet, VAL-ED, and the Heslin Group Satisfaction Inventory were keypunched on computer cards. Sub-scale scores were

computed and keypunched for the 18 sub-scales of VAL-ED and the four sub-scales of the Heslin Group Satisfaction Inventory. All of the principal-teacher value difference scores (computed from the difference in principal-teacher sub-scale scores) and the staff value difference scores (computed from teacher-staff mean score for each sub-scale) were derived by using varied Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Data Modification cards. The absolute difference scores for each subject were punched by the computer on cards which were then used for analysis.

Before the major hypotheses in this study could be examined, it was necessary to dichotomoze the following three variables; schools, high and low group satisfaction; teachers within building, high or low group satisfaction; and schools, high and low staff value congruence. A median split on the schools (buildings) group satisfaction means was used to dichotomoze buildings as either high or low on group satisfaction.

The major statistical analyses were completed by applying the T-test, One-Way Anova, and Two-Way Anova SPSS programs to the collected data.

RESULTS

A significant difference was found to exist between principal-teacher value congruence in low and high group satisfaction schools, but not in the expected direction. Instead of high morale schools being depicted as having a greater principal-teacher value congruence, the opposite occurred. Those schools with a high degree of group satisfaction were found to have a greater degree of principal-teacher

value dispersion rather than value congruence (Table 1).

TABLE 1

T-TEST ANALYSIS OF MEAN PRINCIPAL-TEACHER CONGRUENCE IN HIGH AND LOW GROUP SATISFACTION SCHOOLS

Level of Group Satisfaction	Number of Cases	Mean Scores	Standard Deviation	T Value	Degree of Freedom	Two-Tail Probability
High Group Satisfaction Schools	66	57.2727	21.108			
				5.76	190	.001**
Low Group Satisfaction Schools	126	43.3016	12.416			

* Significance at the .05 level
** Significance at the .01 level

Further analysis related to major hypothesis one indicated that principals in low and high group satisfaction schools did not differ significantly in their VAL-ED sub-scale scores, while teachers did. Teachers, from low and high group satisfaction schools differed significantly, at the .05 level of significance on five value sub-scales, including: Administrator-Teacher Affection, Administrator-Community Inclusion, Administrator-Community Affection, Teacher-Child Affection, and People Should Be Friendly. In each case, the high group satisfaction staffs sub-scale mean scores were higher which indicated a greater value for that particular sub-scale by the high group satisfaction staffs. The affection sub-scales of VAL-ED appear to generate most of the value differences between teachers from low and high group satisfaction schools.

Size of staff was also examined as a possible factor in explaining the principal-teacher value dispersion found in the high group satisfaction schools. Small schools (7-19) teachers were compared against large schools (25-39) teachers to determine if any significant difference was found between principal-teacher value congruence in the two types of schools. Size of school staff was apparently not a factor in explaining the principal-teacher value dispersion found in high group satisfaction schools.

Other factors examined as possible variables for helping to explain the results of major hypothesis one were perceived democratic leadership by the principal and staff task consensus. By analyzing the democratic and task consensus sub-scale scores of the teachers from the high and low group satisfaction schools it was found that teachers in high group satisfaction schools perceived their principals as more democratic and had a greater degree of staff task consensus.

In testing the second major hypothesis, no major difference in group satisfaction was found between staffs displaying a high degree of staff value congruence and staffs displaying a low degree of staff value congruence (Table 2, see page 9).

Analysis of the third hypothesis revealed no difference between high and low group satisfaction members of each teaching staff in their value congruence to their respective principals (Table 3, see page 9). Value congruence between building was significant.

Evaluation of hypothesis four indicated no difference between high and low group satisfaction members of a teaching staff in value congruence with their respective teaching staffs (Table 4, see page 10).

TABLE 2

T-TEST ANALYSIS ON STAFF VALUE CONGRUENCE IN HIGH AND LOW GROUP SATISFACTION SCHOOLS

Level of Group Satisfaction	Number of Cases	Mean Scores	Standard Deviation	T Value	Degree of Freedom	Two-Tail Probability
High Group Satisfaction Schools	66	33.6043	8.846			
				-.80	190	.422
Low Group Satisfaction Schools	126	34.8064	10.305			

* Significant at .05 level
** Significant at .01 level

TABLE 3

TWO-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE: HIGH AND LOW GROUP SATISFACTION TEACHERS BY SCHOOL

Source	Mean Square	DF	F	P
Between Groups	2126.452	12		
Group Satisfaction or Teachers (High or Low)	356.539	1	1.994	.156
Schools	2287.353	11	12.795	.001**
Group Satisfaction of Teachers (High or Low) In Schools	121.004	11	.677	.999
Error	178.770	168		
TOTAL	297.811	191		

* Significant at .05 level
** Significant at .01 level

TABLE 4

TWO-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE: HIGH AND LOW GROUP SATISFACTION TEACHERS BY SCHOOLS

Source	Mean Square	DF	F	P
Between Groups	248.625	12		
Group Satisfaction of Teachers (High or Low)	5.935	1	1.26	.999
Schools	270.688	11	5.730	.001**
Group Satisfaction of Teachers (High or Low) In Schools	22.156	11	.469	.999
Error	47.238	168		
TOTAL	58.446	192		

* Significant at .05 level
** Significant at .01 level

Consistent with hypothesis one the analysis of major hypothesis five indicated that low value congruence staff have a greater degree of group satisfaction than those staffs depicting a high degree of group satisfaction (Table 5, see page 11).

Discussion and Implications

Comparison of the present findings to previous studies must be approached cautiously since a variety of different instruments were used for each study. The comparison of morale scores collected in the present study from using the Heslin Group Satisfaction Inventory to sub-scale scores of the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ)

TABLE 5

T-TEST ANALYSIS ON THE GROUP SATISFACTION OF HIGH AND LOW STAFF VALUE CONGRUENCE SCHOOLS

Level of Staff Value Congruence	Number of Cases	Mean Scores	Standard Deviation	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	Two-Tail Probability
High Value Congruence	84	22.4524	8.727	3.09	190	.002**
Low Value Congruence	108	19.0926	6.346			

* Significant at .05 level
** Significant at .01 level

used by both Lupini and Hodgkinson in their studies would be risky even though the Esprit sub-scale of the OCDQ is rougly defined as a morale measure.

However, with this in mind, several comparisions can be made. First, the concept of leader-group belief system congruence found by Ables and Conway (1973) apparently cannot be generalized to the principal-staff relationship found in the elementary schools under investigation. Secondly, the present findings lend no support to the value congruence-school climate relationship found by Lupini (1965) but do confirm the lack of such a relationship found by Hodgkinson (1969). The findings by Hodgkinson (1969) that principals as a group hold similar values and that as a group, principals differ in values from teachers was also confirmed by the present study. Since two different value instruments were used in the two studies, it would appear that principals and teachers hold different value orientations despite the measuring instrument.

As a result of the present investigation, the importance of principal-teacher value congruence, staff value congruence, or even the values would have to be questioned in relationship to group satisfaction. It appears that the principal who can work with people having different value orientations from his own, employs some democratic leadership practices, has a staff that agrees on overall task consensus, and is willing to work for those goals, will have a high group satisfaction school. The popular practice of asking value related questions in teacher interviews would appear rather useless if the principal is looking for someone holding values similar to his own. Elementary principals should be hired and placed according to their administrative skill rather than whether they fit the value configuration of a community or staff.

This is not to suggest that the administrator be totally irresponsive to interpersonal values but rather that a greater emphasis be placed on group goal and task orientation and professional development. The overall finding that staff value divergence is related to high group satisfaction is consistent with the concept of selecting professionals for their qualifications and skills rather than for their personal beliefs.

From the results, the principal appears to be the key person in fostering staff morale. Further research is, of course, implied especially in examining further the variables and skills required by the principal in handling a diverse staff while working toward a selected educational goal.

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